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Citation for published version:

Paterson, L, Calvin, C & Deary, I 2015, 'Education, employment and school religious denomination in Scotland in the 1950s', *Oxford Review of Education*, vol. 41, no. 1, pp. 26-46.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/03054985.2014.992330>

Digital Object Identifier (DOI):

[10.1080/03054985.2014.992330](https://doi.org/10.1080/03054985.2014.992330)

Link:

[Link to publication record in Edinburgh Research Explorer](#)

Document Version:

Peer reviewed version

Published In:

Oxford Review of Education

Publisher Rights Statement:

This is an Accepted Manuscript of an article published by Taylor & Francis in Oxford Review of Education on 13 December 2014, available online: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03054985.2014.992330>

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Education, employment and school religious denomination in Scotland in the 1950s

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Abstract

Newly available survey data allows the investigation of the educational and employment opportunities open to Roman Catholics in Scotland in the mid-twentieth century. Previous research has shown that Catholic disadvantage in education and the labour market in the early twentieth century had weakened or vanished by the end of the century, and that the main change in that respect had come with the advent of comprehensive secondary schooling in the 1960s. However, the extension of Catholic secondary schooling started in the 1920s. The data used here allow an investigation of whether the Catholic disadvantage was mitigated by these earlier reforms, and thus allow an assessment of whether a selective school system was able to overcome an important dimension of social disadvantage. The data come from a cohort study of a representative sample of people born in 1936 (first surveyed in 1947 and followed up annually to 1963). Evidence is available on social background, on cognitive ability measured at age 11, on secondary school courses, on educational achievement after leaving school, and on social-class status at age 27. The conclusions are that the continued social disadvantage of Catholics was not due to any aspect of the school education which they had received.

Keywords

Religion; social class; Scotland; cohort study; Scottish Mental Survey.

Introduction

The paper investigates religious differences in education, employment and social status in Scotland in the middle of the twentieth century. The particular attention is to the experience of Catholics, who have constituted around 15% of the population since the early twentieth century (Brown 1997: 62-3). At the beginning of the century, Scottish Catholics were of relatively low social status, reflecting their family origins in the nineteenth century mostly as migrant labour from Ireland in search of low-status labouring work. By the end of the twentieth century, their social status was essentially the same as that of the majority (Paterson and Iannelli 2006). The major explanation that has been offered for this integration has been education, since, from the 1920s onwards, the Scottish Catholic church accepted public management of most of its schools in return for state funding, the result being an equalising of educational resources and educational opportunity (Bruce et al 2004; Devine 2000; McPherson and Willms 1986; Paterson and Iannelli 2006). There remains an unanswered question, however, as to when broadly equal opportunity between Catholics and non-Catholics was achieved. The consensus of academic opinion is that the crucial change was the coming of comprehensive secondary schooling from the 1960s, when selection between academic and non-academic types of secondary school was ended in the public sector of schooling (Devine 1999; McPherson and Willms, 1986; Paterson 2000). Using a data source that has not been available for this purpose previously – the Scottish Mental Survey of 1947 – the paper investigates whether the equalisation of opportunity may have occurred somewhat earlier.

The role of education in facilitating the integration into society of disadvantaged social groups has been an important theme in educational sociology (Boliver and Swift 2011; Erikson and Jonsson 1996; Halsey et al. 1980; Kerckhof et al. 1996; Shavit and Blossfeld 1993). The particular version of this question for minority religious groups has always had to be sensitive to the interaction of religion with socio-economic status (Breen and Whelan 1999; Daly 1995; McPherson and Willms 1986; Paterson and Iannelli 2006; Willms 1992). It has been found for many countries over the past half century that Catholic schools have facilitated integration by being probably more effective pedagogically than secular schools, perhaps because they have an ethos focused on academic attainment and because they can draw upon the social capital fostered by the church (Altonji et al., 2005; Bryk et al., 1993; Dronkers and Svrám, 2010; Grace, 2002; McLaughlin et al., 1996). There remains doubt as to whether this may be due to selection effects that have not been allowed for in analysis (Cardak and Vecchi, 2013; Luibieniski et al., 2009). Because our data set has measures of cognitive ability taken when children entered secondary school, as well as measures of family social circumstances, we are able to use quite strong controls for potential selection effects.

Roman Catholics in Scotland in the Twentieth Century

Until the last quarter of the twentieth century, people in Scotland who were members of the Roman Catholic church had, on average, lower socio-economic status than the majority of the population (Brown 1997: 118-22; Bruce et al. 2004: 76-89; Devine 1999: 486-500; Fitzpatrick 1986: 17-42; Paterson and Iannelli 2006; Rosie 2004; Treble 1978, 1980). The main explanation is the origins of most Scottish

Catholics in migration from Ireland in the late-nineteenth century to low-skilled jobs mainly in central Scotland. Only a small minority were in communities that had been continuously Catholic since the Reformation, mainly in some parts of the north-east, the north-western Highland and some of the southern islands off the north-west coast (Brown 1997: 31; Kehoe 2011).

Catering adequately for Catholic educational needs was therefore a recurrent challenge for the church and for the public authorities, especially during the development of secondary education in the first half of the twentieth century (Fitzpatrick 1986; McPherson and Willms 1986; Paterson 2004; Rosie 2004; Treble 1978, 1980). In the late-nineteenth century, the Catholic church was reluctant to accept education in public schools (despite evidence of accommodation of Catholic preferences there). The eventual acceptance of that, with the Education (Scotland) Act of 1918, was because there was no financially viable alternative but to accept public ownership of nearly all Catholic schools in return for public funding. A new sector of Catholic secondary schools was in place by the 1930s. These provided broadly the same opportunities as in the majority non-Catholic secondary schools to enter the highest status courses that led to the Leaving Certificate, which had become, by the 1920s, the main means of entry to the universities or to the professions (Paterson 2004: 64-5). Such courses, which lasted in principle for five years, were available in the academically selective senior-secondary schools. Further widening of educational opportunities for Catholics came in the 1960s and 1970s, when all selection between secondary schools in the public sector in Scotland ended. The resulting comprehensive secondary schools served around 95% of the population (McPherson and Willms 1987; Paterson 2003). This reform had a notable

effect on the Catholic schools, because previously a disproportionate number of them had not offered the senior courses that would lead to universities or to the professions, and so Catholic pupils whose parents wanted them to remain in the Catholic sector had more restricted opportunities for a full academic secondary education than pupils in the non-denominational sector. The result since the 1970s has been a larger-than-average rise in attainment in Catholic schools and in the Catholic population (McPherson and Willms 1986; Paterson 2000; Payne and Ford 1977; Willms 1992). This change thus opened up professional careers to Catholics as never before, with the long-term result that, by the end of the century, the overall socio-economic status of the Catholic population was the same as that of the majority (Bruce et al. 2004: 76-81; Paterson and Iannelli 2006).

Nevertheless, although gaining educational credentials was a necessary part of this process of equalisation, the underlying reason which allowed Catholics to use these in the labour market was a change in the nature of the Scottish economy. Probably because of various kinds of invidious discrimination in employment until at least the 1940s, there was blocked social mobility by Catholics even by the third quarter of the twentieth century, in the sense that their status attainment was lower than their educational potential would indicate (McPherson and Willms 1986; Paterson 2000; Paterson and Iannelli 2006; Payne and Ford 1977; Willms 1992). Such patterns of recruitment could operate in the industrial economy that dominated central Scotland until the 1950s, in which enterprises were mainly family-owned and mainly served geographically clustered communities (Bruce et al. 2004). That economy collapsed between the 1930s and the 1970s, so that recruitment became increasingly meritocratic, either because new employers were

large multinational firms or because a growing share of employment was by the state. The resulting more open labour market enabled Catholics born from the 1950s onwards to use the new system of secondary schools as a route to social mobility (Paterson and Iannelli 2006). The remaining relative social disadvantage in the Catholic population was largely confined to people born earlier than the 1950s (Williams and Walls 2000: 241-2).

This history and previous research has not clarified the relative importance of education and of the social structuring of employment opportunities. In principle, educational opportunity had been made much more equal between Catholics and non-Catholics by the 1930s, and yet the equalising of employment status was not evident before the cohort born after the 1950s (Paterson and Iannelli 2006, Table VI). There are two potential explanations for this delay. One is that the educational equalisation could not have an effect until the economic changes had come about. The other is that the further educational changes represented by the ending of selection among secondary schools in the 1960s were necessary in order to allow employment opportunities to be equalised. We can address this question here by using data from a sample of people born in 1936, and who thus entered secondary school (in 1947-8) well after the earlier educational reforms but before the ending of selection and before the ending of the old economic structures. We can thus ask: did Catholics in this cohort have the same educational opportunities as the majority, and were their educational achievements rewarded in the labour market (in the 1950s) in the same manner as those of the majority?

Data and Methods

The data come from a survey conducted by the Scottish Council for Research in Education of 1,208 people born in Scotland in 1936 who were first contacted in 1947, in the year before they entered secondary school. They were followed up almost annually with structured interviews until 1963. This sample comprised nearly every child in Scotland born on the first day of the even-numbered months of 1936 and attending schools in Scotland in 1947; they were called the Six Day Sample of the Scottish Mental Survey 1947. Further information on the survey methods and the representativeness of the achieved sample are provided by Macpherson (1958), Maxwell (1969), Scottish Council for Research in Education (1949, 1953, 1958), and Deary et al. (2009). Analysis is confined to those sample members who had no missing data on any of the variables defined below and for whom the recorded secondary school was in Scotland: this gave a usable sample of 1025 (85% of the original 1208).

There are six outcome variables in terms of which we compare people who attended Catholic schools with those who attended non-Catholic schools:

1. for the whole sample, whether or not they entered a senior-secondary school (the academically selective sector);
2. for the whole sample, whether or not they entered a five-year course;
3. for those who did enter a five-year course, whether or not they actually entered for the Leaving Certificate;
4. for those who did enter a five-year course, a summary measure of their attainment in the examinations for the Leaving Certificate (see below);

5. for the whole sample, a summary measure of their attainment beyond school up to age 27;
6. for the whole sample, a measure of their social-class status (see below) at age 27.

Outcomes (1), (2) and (3) here are indicators of participation in the highest-status route through Scottish secondary education at that time (Gray et al., 1983; Paterson, 2003), and thus are robust indicators of meritocratic integration.

For outcome variable (4) here, the measure was calculated in terms of passes in the two levels at which Leaving Certificate courses were offered when the sample members would have been taking it (around 1951-3) – Higher or Lower. Here we scored a pass on each subject at the Higher level as two points, and a pass at the Lower level as one point, and then summed these across subjects to give the summary measure of attainment. This summary measure loses detail of school attainment, but has the advantage of being similar to the summative measure of performance that was used at the time to select able students for entry to university and the professions: typically, around three Higher passes and one or two Lower passes would be required for such entry (Gray et al., 1983; Paterson, 2003).

For outcome variable (5), education taken after leaving school and up to age 27 was summarised according to the highest level achieved, in the manner shown in Table 1 (which shows also the numerical values of this variable used in the modelling). Like the measure of attainment at school, this loses detail, but nevertheless does capture the major distinctions in the role of post-school education as a route into good-quality employment, notably among high

achievement (such as a university degree), intermediate achievement (such as trade or secretarial certificates), and low achievement.

For outcome variable (6), the occupational social class achieved by age 27 was derived from the latest measure of the respondent's occupation, classified by the 1951 Classification of Occupations into five categories: class I is professionals, II is intermediate, III is skilled (both non-manual and manual), IV is semi-skilled and V is unskilled. The 1951 scheme was used so as to have the same measure for filial status as for fathers in 1947, which was one of our explanatory variables.

***** Table 1 here *****

The explanatory variables are:

- an IQ measure (based on form L of the Terman-Merrill revision of the Stanford Binet test, taken at age 11, and standardised to have a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 1 in the sample);
- gender;
- father's occupation (classified as for outcome variable (6), but with classes I and II combined because in the sample there were only 17 respondents whose father was in class I);
- whether or not the average age at which the parents left full-time education was greater than 14 (which placed 15% of cases above this threshold, or 17% in non-denominational schools and 6% in Catholic schools). For some purposes, we also show parental education as the average age at which the parents left school, but omitting one outlier

where that was recorded as 0. The reason to use the dichotomised version in the main analysis is that it provided stronger explanatory power.

- the religious denomination of the primary school attended at age 11;
- the religious denomination of the secondary school entered at age 12.

The denomination was obtained from lists of schools published by the SED (for example, SED (1936)), supplemented by other sources, mainly Fitzpatrick (1986);

- for outcome (6), educational attainment after leaving school (outcome (5)) was a further control.

The analysis used linear (outcomes (4), (5) and (6)) and binomial logistic (outcomes (1), (2) and (3)) regression, implemented in the functions ‘lm’ and ‘glm’ in R, to assess differences by school denominational sector with and without control for explanatory variables. The structure of each model takes a similar form. First, the sector difference without controls is shown. Then the cognitive ability variable is added to assess whether the sector difference could be accounted for by measured intelligence; for status attainment by age 27, educational qualifications are also added for the same purpose. Finally, other measures of social characteristics are added (gender, father’s class, and parental education) to investigate whether any non-meritocratic difference between the sectors might be explained by differences in these social characteristics. Interactive effects of sector and ability and of sector and father’s class are also reported in the text to examine whether the effects of ability and of class were operating in common ways in both sectors.

Analysis

Table 2 shows secondary-school denomination by primary-school denomination. There is very close correlation, in the sense that nearly everyone (98.7%) stayed with the same denominational category when they moved from primary to secondary. For this reason, each measure would give very similar indications of denominational experience at school, and so we use only the secondary-school measure, as the one that is closest to the outcome variables (all of which record experience of, attainment in, or progress beyond secondary school).

***** Table 2 here *****

Table 3 describes the characteristics of pupils in the two sectors. The gender distribution is similar in each ($\chi^2 = 0.14$ on 1 df ($p = 0.71$)), even though the Roman Catholic sector had more single-sex girls' schools (Paterson 2011: 126-7). The distribution of parental social class shows very much higher percentages of Roman Catholic pupils in lower classes, and hardly any in the top classes ($\chi^2 = 55.6$ on 3 df ($p < 0.001$): the proportions who were in classes IV or V were 55% in Catholic schools but 30% in non-denominational schools. The similarity of average parental education (t-value for the difference of 1.6 ($p = 0.10$)) is largely because 85% of fathers and 84% of mothers left school at the minimum leaving age, which was 14 from 1901. The association of age-11 ability with sector ($t = 3.4$ ($p < 0.001$), Cohen's $d = 0.29$) is discussed next, since it provides confirmation of the blocked social mobility of Catholics among the parents of cohort members here.

***** Table 3 here *****

The evidence is in Figures 1 and 2 (with corresponding statistical tests in Table 4), in which classes I, II and III have been grouped together to give adequate sample size in the Catholic sector. For the Catholic sector, Figure 1 shows no gradient of parental education across parental social class (the dark bars in the graph), in contrast to the gradient for the non-denominational sector, which shows much higher levels of parental education in the upper social classes than in the lower. This different pattern by denomination is detected in the tests in Table 4 – tending toward a significant F-test for the interactive effect of denomination and class ($p=0.07$). In other words, for children in the higher social classes in the Catholic schools, parental education tended to be lower than for children in similar classes in the non-Catholic schools, and for children in the lower social classes parental education tended to be higher in the Catholic schools than in the non-Catholic schools. This pattern suggests that the labour-market experience of parents of children in Catholic schools had not been dependent on education to the same extent as had the labour-market experience of parents of children in the non-Catholic school. In contrast, Figure 2 shows, in each denomination, a similar gradient of cognitive ability across classes (and Table 4 shows no evidence of any interaction). Thus the relationship between the child's cognitive ability and denominational sector did not differ by parental class in the same way as did the pattern of parental education.

***** Figure 1 here *****

***** Figure 2 here *****

***** Table 4 here *****

This is clarified by examining child IQ by parental education and by social class, shown in Figure 3, where, for convenience of representation, both parental education and parental social class have been dichotomised. Within each social-class group, the average increment in IQ associated with the higher parental-education group does not differ by denomination (in the sense that there was little denominational difference in the difference between the 'up to 14' and 'over 14' bars in each class group). So there was no denominational difference in the extent to which parents were passing on whatever educational resources they had: the problem for children at Catholic schools was that their parents tended to have fewer such resources than children in non-denominational schools. In one respect, the whole purpose of policy was to use Catholic schools to overcome this disadvantage.

***** Figure 3 here *****

Table 5 shows simple summaries of the dependent variables in the models, and the main initial point to note is that, before taking account of measured ability or social circumstances, people in the Catholic schools, when compared to those in the non-Catholic sector, are seen to be less likely to be in the academically selective senior-secondary schools (47% against 35%), or to be on the five-year courses leading to the leaving certificate and potentially to the professions or to university (32% against 18%). They are less likely actually to enter for these certificate courses (12% against 6%). They also have lower average attainment in these courses, lower attainment in education taken beyond school, and lower status attainment in the labour market. The main purpose of the statistical modelling is to investigate explanations of these differences.

***** Table 5 here *****

Table 6 models opportunities to enter the high-status parts of the secondary system – the senior-secondary schools and the five-year courses. Model 1 in each segment shows the unadjusted difference in the opportunities available in the Catholic and the non-Catholic sectors, and thus these models merely confirm the descriptive results in Table 5: the results appear to show Catholic disadvantage, with lower chances of entering a senior-secondary school (-0.52 (s.e. 0.16)) or a five-year course (-0.77 (s.e. 0.20)). Model 2 controls for cognitive ability measured at age 11, and has reduced the latter difference to -0.58, although there is still some evidence of it: thus, even for children of similar ability, the opportunities in Catholic schools were lower than those in non-Catholic schools.

***** Table 6 here *****

For entry to senior-secondary schools, that remaining deficit is partly accounted for by the social characteristics of the families which the sectors served; in Model 3 in the left-hand part of Table 6, the sector difference is reduced to -0.18 (s.e. 0.19). There was no evidence of any interactive effect of denominational sector with ability (not shown in the table: interactive terms of -0.04 (s.e. 0.24) for entering a senior-secondary school, and of 0.24 (s.e. 0.40) for entering a five-year course). So the Scottish Education Department had not yet dealt with the socially differentiated distribution of selective opportunities (as was then becoming evident in the more general pressure for non-selective secondary schooling in the 1960s (Gray et al. 1983)). However, within that, they had dealt with the denominational aspects in the

sense that lower-class Catholics now had the same opportunities as lower-class non-Catholics, but neither had the same opportunities as higher-class groups.

Table 7 then models progress amongst those who did enter senior-secondary schools. Here the pattern is very clear: in neither progress towards the leaving certificate (left-hand segment of the table) nor attainment in the leaving certificate (right-hand segment) is there firm evidence of Catholic disadvantage at all, and a large part of any possible disadvantage is explained by cognitive ability in Models 2. Again, there was no interactive effect of ability and denominational sector (-0.20 (s.e. 0.54) for taking any leaving-certificate course, and -0.33 (s.e. 0.37) for attainment in such courses). In that sense, selection was working fairly: once selected, pupils made progress commensurate with their ability, regardless of religion.

***** Table 7 here *****

Tables 8 and 9 show progress beyond school. In post-school educational opportunities (Table 8), people who had attended Catholic schools had lower attainment than people who had attended non-Catholic schools (coefficient of -0.78 (s.e. 0.24)), but a large part of that disadvantage is explained by ability and social background. So the disadvantage seems not to have been due to the schools, but rather to social status and to concomitant low measured ability.

***** Table 8 here *****

Likewise, people who had attended Catholic schools had lower status attainment (in Table 9, Model 1, -0.25 (s.e. 0.07)), but that is explained by ability and qualifications (in Model 3, -0.09 (s.e. 0.06)). In that sense, for people born in 1936 the labour market was operating in a merit-based way. Gender, class of origin and

parental education explain only a little more of the denominational difference (bringing it further down to -0.06 (s.e. 0.06)). It is true that people from the lowest class were not having their credentials or ability rewarded appropriately (since they still show a deficit of -0.27 (s.e. 0.09)), but that was no worse for people who had attended Catholic schools: the interactive effect of denominational sector and class of origin (not shown in the table) had $F = 0.87$ on 3 and 1,011 df ($p = 0.46$). As early as the late-1940s, therefore, leavers from Catholic and from non-Catholic schools had equal meritocratic opportunities in the labour market.

***** Table 9 here *****

Conclusions

Before we sum up, we would mention two main methodological weaknesses of the present analysis. The main one is the relatively small sample size of 1,025. This reduces the statistical power, which is a particular problem when the main research question relates to whether a certain phenomenon – Catholic disadvantage – is absent. We have tried to allow for the resulting tendency towards not disconfirming the null hypothesis (of no disadvantage) by pointing to places where the evidence for a disadvantage was significant only at the 10% level, but the intrinsic uncertainty remains.

The second methodological weakness for investigating potential religious differences is that we have measures only of the denomination of the school which people attended, not of their family religion directly. Nevertheless, in the close correspondence between primary-school and secondary-school denomination we had grounds for believing that, when these people entered secondary school in the

middle of the twentieth century, family religion and school religion were closely aligned. In any case, investigating the characteristics and long-term effects of attending schools of different denominations is interesting in its own right, regardless of how school religion relates to family religion.

Three main points may be made in conclusion, relating the empirical analysis to the debates outlined earlier. The first point is that our evidence suggests that the school system achieved what it set out to achieve in the 1920s – expanding meritocratic opportunities for Catholics. There was no evidence that opportunities for people of given measured ability at age 11 and given social class were any lower in Catholic schools than in non-denominational schools by the end of the 1940s at the latest (Table 6). If opportunity to enter high-status courses was lower in Catholic schools than in non-denominational schools, that was mostly explained by the lower socio-economic status and lower measured ability of pupils in Catholic schools. These were probably legacies of the history of the Catholic population, but they were not directly the responsibility of schools in the 1950s: thus, so far as the school system was concerned, children of similar measured intelligence and similar social status were treated the same, regardless of denomination. Once on these high-status courses, pupils made progress commensurate with their measured intelligence, not even allowing for socio-economic status (Table 7). However, there was thus no evidence that Catholic schools were more effective than their non-denominational counterparts, unlike in some of the research cited earlier.

Thus the selective academic courses were operating in a merit-based way well before the advent of comprehensive secondary education after 1965. The ending of

selection may have aided Catholics further, as has been argued previously on the basis of data collected later than those used here (see the first section above), but we are now able to say that the process of relative improvement in the opportunities available through the Catholic schools owed a great deal to educational reforms which dated back to early in the century. Much the same was then true also of educational attainment for the whole sample following school (Table 8), which suggests that opportunities to acquire vocational training were as equal between Catholics and non-Catholics as was entry into the academic route that would lead to the professions.

The second conclusion is that opportunity in the labour market, too, was close to being meritocratic as between the two denominational sectors. Thus, although people who attended Catholic schools had on average lower social status at age 27 than people who had attended non-Catholic schools, that was explained by educational attainment up to that age and by measured ability at age 11. A strength of the data source used here is that it had information on access to schooling, on progress within school, on educational attainment beyond school, and on status attainment in early adulthood, thus allowing this whole longitudinal trajectory up to age 27 to be traced. No other data source in Scotland has allowed this for any point in the century.

The final conclusion returns us to the main research questions outlined at the beginning: in the middle of the twentieth century, were educational opportunity and opportunities in the labour market meritocratic as between Catholics and non-Catholics? The answer on the first point is unambiguously that it was. There was no

intrinsically denominational difference in opportunity to take part in academic courses, in school attainment, or in post-school attainment up to age 27. There were disadvantages in all these respects associated with being of low measured ability and low social status, and thus young people in Catholic schools continued to suffer from the legacy of their parents' low status in society and from low cognitive ability. But these social effects on educational opportunity were the same in Catholic schools as in non-denominational schools.

On the research questions relating to social status at age 27, we can reach similar conclusions, and attribute these to the effects of Catholic schooling. The relatively low average social status at age 27 of people who had attended Catholic schools was due to their measured ability and their educational attainment. Thus the labour market as early as the 1950s was operating meritocratically as between people who attended different denominations of school.

These results provide new insights into denominational differences in Scotland in the middle of the twentieth century. Essentially, by comparison with previous research, we have been able to demonstrate two new conclusions. One is that, some two decades before the introduction of comprehensive secondary education, the school system was already operating in the same way for children in Catholic and non-Catholic schools. The other conclusion is that the labour market in the 1950s, too, was already operating in similar ways for people who had attended Catholic or non-Catholic schools. Thus we have added to existing knowledge the finding that an academically divided secondary-school system could be a means of offering equal opportunities to a previously marginalised religious group, in the

sense that it could offer the chance to make progress educationally that did not depend on the school as such, being associated only with measured ability and with socio-economic status. The labour market, too, was then operating similarly, in that there was no evidence of invidious selection based on the denomination of the school, although there was evidence that people with low-social-class origins were not having their measured credentials as well rewarded in the labour market as people of more socially advantaged origins. The conclusion of previous research (noted earlier in the paper) on the opportunities that were open to Scottish Catholics – that the ending of selection between secondary schools after 1965 was crucial to making educational opportunities equal between Catholics and non-Catholics – has to be revised, since it seems that, on the whole, opportunity was no different between Catholic and non-denominational schools even before that time. The policy changes that had the largest impact may have been those of liberal reformers with an ideology of merit-selection in the period after 1918 rather more than of social-democratic reformers with more egalitarian beliefs after the 1960s.

In short, by the middle of the twentieth century, Catholics in Scotland were benefiting from the long-term effect of investment by public authorities, in partnership with the Catholic church. The resulting opportunities laid the basis for the emergence of a Catholic middle class in the last quarter of the twentieth century. Nevertheless, the evidence also shows the limits of what schooling can achieve on its own in a particular generation: the continuing disadvantage of Catholics was not due to educational discrimination on religious grounds, nor to labour-market discrimination in the 1950s or 1960s, but to their parents' experience of a discriminatory labour market earlier. That changed only with the economic

changes after the 1950s. But the generations of Catholics, following the cohort studied here, could take advantage of new, more open recruitment practices into jobs only because the schools were in place to allow these new generations to acquire the credentials that would enable them to do so.

Acknowledgements

The paper has been benefited from comments by Dr Michael Rosie (Edinburgh University), to whom we are grateful.

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Table 1
Post-School Attainment

	All
Level of attainment:	%
0 None	54
1 Low	3
2 Trade certificate	15
3 Secretarial certificate	12
4 City and Guilds	4
5 Ordinary National Certificate etc	1
6 Higher National Certificate	1
7 Nursing qualification	3
8 Non-graduate teaching qualification	2
9 Non-degree professional qualification	2
10 Degree	4
Sample size	1025 (=100%)

Table 2

Secondary-school denomination by primary-school denomination

Column % Secondary-school denomination	Primary-school denomination	
	Non-denominational	Roman Catholic
Non-denominational	99.0	2.5
Roman Catholic	1.0	97.5
Total	824	197

Excludes 4 respondents who were in Episcopal primary schools (all of whom attended non-denominational secondary schools).

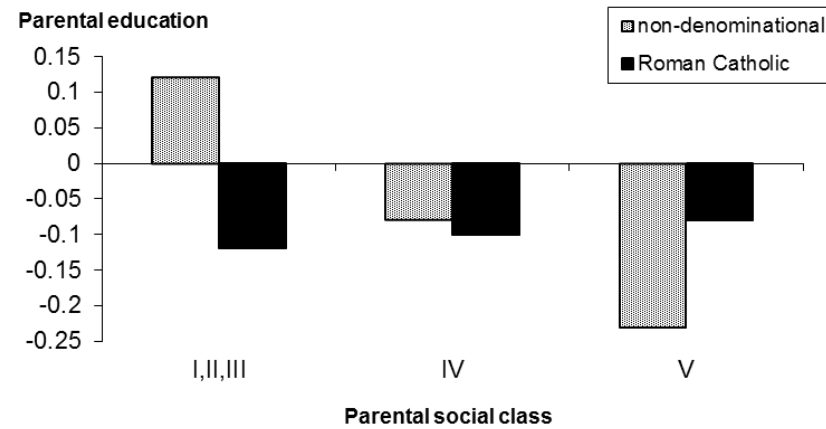
Table 3**Characteristics of the sectors of secondary-school denomination**

Secondary-school denomination	Sample size	Female (%)	Parental social class (% in row)				Parental education (average age at leaving school) ¹		Ability at age 11 (standardised)	
			I,II	III	IV	V	Mean (s.e.)	S.D.	Mean (s.e.)	S.D.
Non-denominational	824	53	13	57	16	14	14.1 (0.04)	1.0	0.052 (0.04)	1.0
Roman Catholic	200	51	2	44	23	32	14.0 (0.04)	0.53	-0.22 (0.06)	0.86

¹ omitting one outlier: see text.

Figure 1

Mean parental education (standardised) by school denomination and parental social class



Parental education is average age at which parents left school, standardised (omitting one outlier: see text)..

For analysis of variance, see Table 4.

Figure 2

Mean ability at age 11 (standardised) by school denomination and parental social class



Ability at age 11 is standardised.

For analysis of variance, see Table 4.

Table 4

Analysis of variance of association of parental education and of ability at age 11 with parental social class and secondary-school denomination

Model term	Degrees of freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F	Eta squared
<i>Parental education (standardised)¹: see also Figure 1</i>					
Secondary-school denomination	1	3.45	3.45	4.22*	0.004
Parental social class	2	9.90	4.95	6.06**	0.012
Secondary-school denomination by parental class	2	4.33	2.17	2.65(*)	0.005
Residual	1018	831.02	0.82		
<i>Ability at age 11 (standardised): see also Figure 2</i>					
Secondary-school denomination	1	11.5	11.5	12.1**	0.012
Parental social class	2	42.9	21.4	22.5**	0.042
Secondary-school denomination by parental social class	2	0.83	0.42	0.44	0.001
Residual	1019	968.8	0.95		

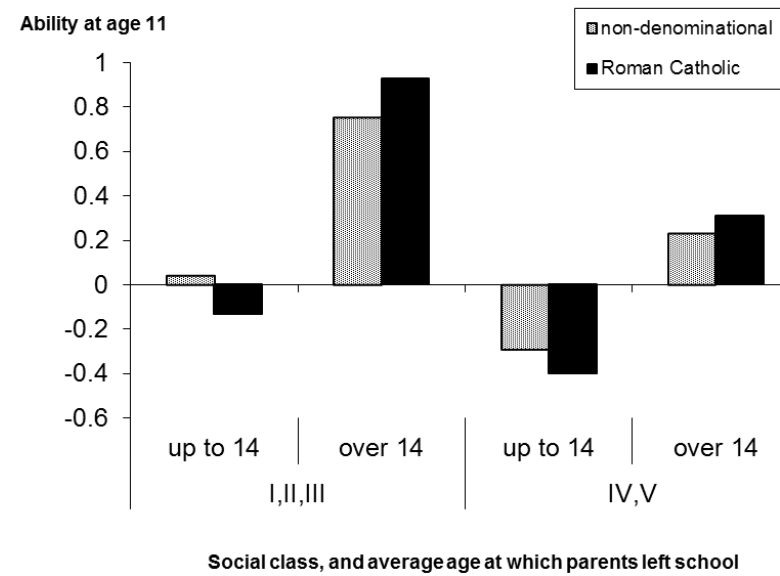
¹ average age at which parents left full-time education (omitting one outlier): see text

Classes I, II and III have been grouped: see text.

Key for statistical significance levels: ** $p < 0.01$; * $0.01 < p < 0.05$; (*) $0.05 < p < 0.10$.

Figure 3

Mean ability at age 11 (standardised) by school denomination, parental social class and parental education



Ability at age 11 is standardised.

Table 5

Summaries of outcome variables, by sector of secondary-school denomination

Secondary-school denomination	Senior-secondary school at age 11-12 (%)	Five-year course at age 15 (%)	Taking any certificate course (%)	Summary attainment in certificate courses (among those who are taking any)		Post-school educational attainment (to age 27)		Social class at age 27 (high value = high class)	
				Mean (s.e.)	S.D.	Mean (s.e.)	S.D.	Mean (s.e.)	S.D.
Non-denominational	47	32	12	6.6 (0.35)	3.4	2.2 (0.11)	3.2	2.9 (0.03)	0.89
Roman Catholic	35	18	6	5.5 (1.0)	3.6	1.4 (0.17)	2.4	2.7 (0.06)	0.84

Sample sizes: 825 non-denominational, 200 in Catholic.

Table 6

	Entry to high-status secondary courses											
	In senior-secondary school at age 11-12 (binary logistic regression)						On five-year course at age 15 (binary logistic regression)					
	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	coeff.	s.e.	coeff.	s.e.	coeff.	s.e.	coeff.	s.e.	coeff.	s.e.	coeff.	s.e.
Intercept	-0.12(*)	0.07	-0.17*	0.08	-0.09*	0.38	-0.75**	0.07	-1.25**	0.11	-1.32**	0.44
Secondary-school denomination (ref. non-denominational)												
Roman Catholic	-0.52**	0.16	-0.34(*)	0.18	-0.18	0.19	-0.77**	0.20	-0.58*	0.25	-0.41	0.26
Ability at age 11 (standardised)			1.14**	0.09	1.08**	0.09			2.07**	0.14	2.01**	0.14
Gender (ref. male)												
Female					0.08	0.14					0.23	0.19
Class (ref. I & II)												
III					-0.76**	0.26					-0.71*	0.30
IV					-0.97**	0.30					-0.83*	0.36
V					-0.86**	0.30					-0.69(*)	0.37
Parental education ¹					0.60**	0.23					0.69**	0.25

¹ whether or not average age at which parents left full-time education was greater than 14.

Key for statistical significance levels: ** $p < 0.01$; * $0.01 < p < 0.05$; (*) $0.05 < p < 0.10$.

Table 7

	Progress in senior-secondary schools						Summary attainment in certificate examinations (linear regression)					
	Taking any certificate course (binary logistic regression)											
	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	coeff.	s.e.	coeff.	s.e.	coeff.	s.e.	coeff.	s.e.	coeff.	s.e.	coeff.	s.e.
Intercept	1.13**	0.12	-2.46**	0.23	-2.78	0.59	1.60**	0.16	0.77**	0.16	1.42	0.58
Secondary-school denomination (ref. non-denominational)												
Roman Catholic	-0.54	0.35	-0.20	0.40	-0.01	0.42	-0.73(*)	0.42	-0.29	0.36	-0.08	0.36
Ability at age 11 (standardised)			1.52**	0.17	1.48**	0.18			1.51**	0.12	1.43**	0.12
Gender (ref. male)												
Female					-0.02	0.28					-0.15	0.25
Class (ref. I & II)												
III					-0.86*	0.36					-1.59**	0.36
IV					-0.01	0.48					-0.92*	0.48
V					-1.57*	0.66					-1.35**	0.50
Parental education ¹					0.71*	0.30					0.38	0.32

¹ whether or not average age at which parents left full-time education was greater than 14.

Analysis confined to the 457 sample members who were in senior-secondary school at age 11-12.

Key for statistical significance levels: ** $p < 0.01$; * $0.01 < p < 0.05$; (*) $0.05 < p < 0.10$.

Table 8

Post-school educational attainment (to age 27): linear regression	Post-school educational attainment					
	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	coeff.	s.e.	coeff.	s.e.	coeff.	s.e.
Intercept	2.19**	-0.11	2.10**	0.09	-2.08**	0.42
Secondary-school denomination (ref. non-denominational)						
Roman Catholic	-0.78**	0.24	-0.34(*)	0.20	-0.18	0.21
Ability at age 11 (standardised)			1.64**	0.08	1.53**	0.08
Gender (ref. male)						
Female					-0.14	0.16
Class (ref. I & II)						
III					-0.96**	0.27
IV					-0.83*	0.32
V					-1.08**	0.33
Parental education ¹					0.68**	0.24

¹ whether or not average age at which parents left full-time education was greater than 14.

Key for statistical significance levels: ** $p < 0.01$; * $0.01 < p < 0.05$; (*) $0.05 < p < 0.10$.

Table 9

Post-school status attainment

Social class at age 27 (high values mean high class) (linear regression)	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	coeff.	s.e.	coeff.	s.e.	coeff.	s.e.	coeff.	s.e.
Intercept	-3.08**	0.03	-3.10**	0.03	-3.32**	0.03	3.44**	0.12
Secondary-school denomination (ref. non-denominational)								
Roman Catholic	-0.25**	0.07	-0.13*	0.06	-0.09(*)	0.06	-0.06	0.06
Ability at age 11 (standardised)			0.43**	0.02	0.26**	0.03	0.24**	0.03
Post-school attainment					0.10**	0.01	0.10**	0.01
Gender (ref. male)								
Female							-0.08(*)	0.04
Class (ref. I & II)								
III							-0.06	0.08
IV							0.03	0.09
V							-0.27**	0.09
Parental education ¹							0.14*	0.07

¹ whether or not average age at which parents left full-time education was greater than 14.

Key for statistical significance levels: ** $p < 0.01$; * $0.01 < p < 0.05$; (**) $0.05 < p < 0.10$.